THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN INTELLIGENCER.

Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders;
Gott helfe mir! Amen!—LUTHER.

VOL. III.] **DECEMBER, 1828.** [No. 10.

Christmas.

The Christian Church will soon celebrate a day, which associated with it, recollections and feelings of the most thrilling interest. The anniversary of the incarnation of the adorable Jesus always awakens emotions of the most elevated character. The exercises of the day are calculated to excite us to the contemplation of his whole life, and of the wonderful changes which his system of religion has wrought upon the moral character of mankind. We are constrained to adore, to wonder and to praise; While we sit and hear what He has accomplished, and engaged in exercises of devotion peculiarly adapted to the solemnities of the day, we seem to be revived in our spirits, and to love the Saviour more ardently than ever.

Dark and awfully degenerated was the moral condition of the world at the time of His appearance. The state of the Jews was wretched and deplorable in the extreme. National calamities, and a corrupt administration of their government, had produced a sad declension from the religion of their fathers—overrun and oppressed by cruel conquerors—groaning under the weight of an enormous taxation—their temple polluted by the foot of the heathen—their altar defiled by the sacrifice of unclean animals—the civil power wrested from their hands, and their holy city made the residence of unsanctified Gentiles, all these calamities combined to depress their national ambition, and to create an indifference and apathy towards their national religion. But their corruption was not entirely owing to foreign causes. A withering spirit of formality and pompous exhibition of religion, had struck deep root within. The animosity and recrimination of the most uncharitable sectarianism extended around their desolating sway. In such a state of affairs little genuine religion can be expected. The altar seldom smoked with the sacrifice of the real penitent—the gates of the temple were seldom

crowded with pious worshippers. But "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" is born. He came, not as the Jews vainly expected to deliver them from the Roman yoke, and restore them to their national rights and privileges, but he came to bring them back to the true worship of God—to instruct them in the things pertaining to their salvation—to abolish that deadening system of morals, that was prevalent amongst them—to fulfil the prophecies of their own scriptures and to wrest the law from their infamous perversions—to exhibit an example of spotless purity, and to denounce the shallow righteousness of the day—to illustrate in substance, what had been so long represented in types and shadows, and to manifest in His person, what had been so long shrouded in emblems and figures—he came finally, to abolish the sacrifice of the temple, by offering up Himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness, by enduring the penalties of the violated law.

The condition of the heathen world at the time of the Saviour's advent was lamentable in the extreme. The common people were sunk into the lowest depths of moral degradation, while the more cultivated class pursued the dictates of an erroneous philosophy founded on the licentiousness of man; while it taught nothing respecting the nature and character of the true God, and of immortality, its tendency was to inspire man with elevated ideas of his own greatness, and to lower the Deity to an equality with himself. Something precisely like the doctrines of Jesus, was wanting in those days of deep and brutal degradation, something that would disentangle their affections from the meanest employments, and the basest practises, something that would inculcate the obligations of religion and virtue. When the divine precepts of the Saviour were proclaimed, accompanied by the invincible attestation of miracles, a new era commenced; light gradually broke in upon them. It was like the morning sun, enlightening and cheering the earth, after a dark and tempestuous night. Surely this was *good news* to an idolatrous world; and not only to the degraded heathen of our Saviour's time, but to those of every succeeding age, down to the present day.

We are the descendants of the heathen. Our distant progenitors once bowed the knee to Baal, and found a god in every grove and rill. How wretched was their condition!—and yet such would be ours at this moment had not the glad tidings of an Almighty Saviour been communicated to us. We would *now*, as they did, worship an image of stone, or the stock of a tree. We would *now* be celebrating the praises of a wooden deity, and joining in all the unhallowed revels of heathen superstition. We would be the subjects of unrestrained passion, of midnight terrors, of perpetual misery. There would be nothing to excite us to

diligence in life, nothing to console and cheer us in death. There would be no incentive to godliness, no determent from vice, no promise, no hope of immortality. Darkness and uncertainty, ignorance and despondency would enshroud our path, until we died in despair, or with the stupid apathy of the brute. But, glory to God in the highest, this is not our lamentable condition. The "way, the truth and the life" have been revealed in the incarnation of Jesus. The darkness of heathenism has been dispelled, the light of the everblessed gospel has shone upon us. Let us praise Him for His wonderful condescension, and his unspeakable love. When we enter His holy temple on the approaching anniversary of His birth, where He delights to meet His followers, let us solemnly renew our covenant with Him, and exhibit in our lives more forcibly than ever, the sanctifying influence of the doctrines which He taught, and appreciate more dearly the everlasting benefits which He purchased with His atoning blood. HERMANN.

On the various divisions of the Decalogue.

No. I.

Mr. Editor,—The pages of your useful Magazine have ordinarily and very properly been devoted only to the discussion of those important points of faith and practice, which have a dense connexion with the character of christians; and which may afford to your readers important aid in their journey towards heaven. It may, indeed, be regarded as one of the most pleasing characteristics of the present age, that the greater part of the religious periodicals of the day, partake so largely of the same character; that they are so much distinguished for liberality of view and charity of feeling, and that so few of our editors can justly be stigmatized with the epithet of heresy-hunters, or be regarded as disturbers of the peace of the church. Entertaining these views, the writer would be the last to divert the current of your work into the channel of useless and unprofitable disputation. Yet circumstances may occur, which render it proper to review the grounds of our belief even in points of minor importance, and which confer not only interest but also utility on the discussion. Such circumstances the writer feels are necessary as an apology for inviting the attention of your readers to an examination of the various divisions of the Decalogue, which has prevailed in the church of the Old and New Testament. He feels the force and the applicability of the observation made by the learned and excellent Danhauer: "that the most accurate division of the divine precepts will advance our piety but little, if we neglect to obey their

injunctions;"* and therefore does not wish either by the manner or the matter of this discussion to give an undue importance to the question involved in it. Indeed, the conviction of the writer that an impartial examination of this subject would best demonstrate how certainly it is a matter of comparative indifference, rendered him the more willing to comply with the wishes of those esteemed and respected brethren, by whose request these communications are sent to you. And their wishes were based upon the fact that they have seen evil effects resulting to some from a want of acquaintance with the history, the comparative merits, and real indifference of the diversity which actually exists on this subject in different Protestant catechisms. But we proceed to the subject before us, and will endeavour more clearly to show that

1. *It is a point of no material importance either to the faith or practice of Christians.*

All Protestant churches agree in receiving the whole decalogue, as it is contained in the sacred volume. The question is not, shall any one of the ten commandments be omitted, but shall a particular explanation of one of the commandments, be considered as a part of that commandment and be annexed to it in our catechisms, or shall it be separated from it and be called a distinct precept. The command in question is that which in most modern classifications is called the first, namely: "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." This is a generic command, and forbids all kinds of idolatry. But in order to render it more plain to mankind, God has seen fit to add an explanation specifying several kinds of false gods which the heathen were wont to worship, namely gods of wood, stone or metal, which were to represent the objects of their idolatrous homage, and in some cases were themselves to be the subjects of it. Now the question is, shall this explanation be considered as a part of the commandment to which it refers, or be called a separate one. But it is not only the first command to which such explanations are added; that concerning the sabbath day contains similar specifications. These specifications have been omitted for the sake of brevity by some of the early Fathers of the Christian church, in their doctrinal compends, and by the Catholic church in her breviaries. The same has been done in some smaller catechisms of Protestant churches. Since the time of the introduction of images into the worship of the Roman Catholic church, it has been said, and doubtless not without reason, that it has been the practice and policy of that corrupt church to keep out of view of the people the specification of the first commandment: thou shalt not make any graven image, &c. lest they

* "Parum ad pietatis studium facere, si præcepta Dei recte quidem numeres; male vero custodias."—Col. decalog. p. 16.

should thereby condemn their own practice. But no one acquainted with antiquity can attribute similar motives to the early Fathers of the church, in whose days the use of images in churches was unknown.— Nor can it by any intelligent person be charged upon any Protestant churches that they omit any of the precepts; because although the specifications are omitted in some of the smaller catechisms, they are all contained in others of larger size and even comprehended by inference in the explanations of the smaller ones. Thus *Luther*, in many of his works discusses the specifications of the several commandments, expressly states that the explanation concerning images belongs to the first commandment, "thou shalt have no other gods before me," and actually joins both together,* and yet for the sake of brevity omits them in his catechism.

Finally, that this is indeed a point of but little importance is evident from the fact, that it was so considered by the great body of divines who adopted different divisions, in the days of the Reformation, and the two contentious centuries which followed. *Walch*, in the commencement of the last century, expressing the sentiment of the Lutheran church generally, says: "This difference is of little importance; for if the matter be rightly examined, it will appear, that the liberty of chosing either division, may with propriety be given to every one."† And *Calvin*, who adopted a different division, very candidly remarks: "The nature of this subject is such, that each one ought to be permitted to follow his own judgment, and that we ought not to quarrel with those who differ from us."‡

2. *The divisions of the Decalogue have been numerous, and constructed on different principles.*

The first of these divisions which calls for our attention, is that

1. *Into the two tables.*

As to the fact of this division of the decalogue there can be no doubt; for, in the book of Exodus‖ we find these express words: "And he (God) gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him on Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, (or as the Hebrew term more properly here signifies, *tables of laws*,) tables of stone, written with the finger§ of God." The same fact is also taught in other passages.¶ But although we know that the tables of stone, used by God

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* See his work Von Bildersturmen, Tom. 2. ed. Wittemb.

† J. G. Walchii Introductio in Libros Eccl. Luther. Symbolicos, p. 655.

‡ Ejus generis rem esse memineris, in qua liberum cuique judicium esse debeat, ob quam non sit contentiose cum dissentiente pugnandum. Instit. Christ. Relig. Lib. 2. cap. 8.

‖ Exodus, chap. xxxi. 18. § Alii volunt *virtute* vel *opere* Dei, Vide Luk. xi. 20. ¶ Deut. 4; 13; and 5; 22.

to record the ten commandments, were two in number; the sacred volume no where distinctly informs us, how many precepts were inscribed on each. On this subject however one opinion universally prevails.—When one of the Jewish lawyers came to our blessed Saviour, tempting him and saying, "Master which is the great commandment in the law?" The Redeemer replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and added, "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;"* that is, in these two they are all comprehended. This division of our Saviour is a perfectly logical one, and distinctly embraces all the precepts of the decalogue; for they are all duties which we owe, either to God, or to our fellow-men. Hence as he calls that portion of the decalogue which relates to our duties to God generically one precept, and the first precept; it has been generally supposed that these were contained on one and the first table of stone; whilst the second generic precept was recorded on the other. This inference is not justified by the premises, but the conjecture is a plausible one, and perhaps rendered a little more so by the fact that the precepts thus assigned to the first table, though fewer in number than those of the second, contain more than half the matter of the whole decalogue as recorded in Exodus. As the question itself is moreover one of not the least practical moment, it is pleasing to the Christian mind to reflect upon the harmony which has prevailed on this subject throughout the history of the church of God; and we must only add our regret that a similar display of good feeling was not always witnessed, in reference to some of the other equally unimportant divisions which we purpose to discuss in our succeeding number.

——* Matthew 22; 35, &c. G. C.

A Charge.

We stated in our last, that the President of the Synod of Maryland and Virginia, delivered an interesting Charge on occasion of the ordination of several young brethren. As we coincide in opinion with our beloved brethren, that such addresses should be occasionally published, and that in this, are contained important facts and truths, alike interesting and instructive to Ministers and Lay-men, we cannot but hope, that its publication will be highly approved of, by all our readers who are devoted to the cause of Christ. It will at any rate, enable all to judge what Spirit prevails, where true Lutheranism exists.

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 Tim. iv. 16.

MY BELOVED FRIENDS, AND BROTHERS;

Agreeably to the command of our Lord, and in conformity to the apostolic example, we have inducted you into the ministerial office, by prayer and the imposition of hands. You have been ordained to the work of Evangelists, to that work which imposes upon you the solemn and sacred duty of preaching Christ and him crucified, of declaring to sinful man the pure and unadulterated truth of God as it is in Jesus, and of illustrating and exemplifying in your daily walk and conversation, the efficacy and excellency of that truth.

The present period, the period of your induction into the office of reconciliation, is at once eventful and interesting. A spirit of religious improvement has gone abroad in the world, and is exerting its benign influence over the children of men. Wherever we cast our eyes, we see the Christian community actively engaged. The *Bible*, the *Bible*, appears to be the watchword, and the dissemination of its heaven-born truths, the motto of the protestant world. The humble cottages of the indigent, no less than the splendid and stately mansions of the opulent are alike supplied with the book whose author is God, whose contents are truth and whose object is salvation. Ministers of almost every denomination have gone forth in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to distant climes, to christianize the world, and bring all its kingdoms and nations into subjection to the sceptre of Immanuel. They have forsaken father and mother, houses and lands for the sake of Christ and his gospel. The world is their parish, and all its inhabitants their charge.

Nor will this work of evangelization cease or be arrested in its progress, until the banners of the Cross shall be unfurled and wave in triumph in every land. The temples of idolatry must be demolished, their imaginary deities must be destroyed, the enchantments muttered to devils must be converted into songs of salvation, the wilderness and solitary places must be made glad by the heralds of the Cross, and the desert must rejoice and blossom as the rose, and until this is achieved there will be no cessation in the mighty work.

We rejoice that we have it in our power to say, that that department also of the christian church to which we belong, has not remained indifferent amidst the general revival; that we too have been aroused from our slumbers, and are sensibly alive to the moral and religious improvement of the age in which we live. We too have caught the sacred flame, and thanks be to God, have been quickened to a life of zeal and activity in the good work. Sunday schools abound in our churches,

Missionary societies are every where springing up, education associations are multiplying; the cause of the Bible has many able and efficient friends within the bounds of our jurisdiction, and above all, a *Theological Seminary* has been recently ushered into existence in our midst, under the fostering care of an able Board of Directors, headed by a *Professor* distinguished alike by the profoundest erudition and the most devoted piety, furnished with a number, large beyond our most sanguine expectations, of very hopeful candidates for the ministry; a Seminary, which, while it has been the favourite object of our most affectionate regard, of our most tender anxieties and sincerest prayers; has already been so signally favored with the propitious smiles of the Bishop of souls; that it bids fair to become by far the most powerful instrument that has ever been put into operation in our Church in this country, for extending our Zion, elevating its dignity, and supplying our destitute congregations with able, pious and efficient pastors.

And is not this state of affairs encouraging to us, and to all the friends of the Redeemer's Kingdom? May we not indulge the delightful hope that the *day-spring* from on high is about to visit our church, and that a season of refreshing is about to be vouchsafed to us from the presence of the Lord? Do not our eyes behold things that are marvellous and that evidently indicate the dawning of the latter-day glory? Is not the Lord God of Hosts gathering together and marshalling his sacramental host for the complete discomfiture of the Prince of darkness, for the utter submission of the Kingdom of Satan? Yes, yet a little, and the nations will flock to the standard of the Cross like doves to their windows—Yet a little, and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, and there shall not be left a kingdom, or people or tribe which shall not be the willing property of our God and of his Christ.

Yes, my young brothers, you have stepped forth into the battle of the Lord at a period big with events, and highly fraught with interest.—Surely you cannot but be tremblingly alive to the interesting nature of the relation upon which you have entered, and to the solemnity and responsibility of your high and arduous calling. You cannot but feel anxious to join the conflict,—your hearts burn within you to be stationed in the very heat of the battle, and spend whatever strength the Captain of your salvation may grant you, on the side of truth. Knowing that your labour in the Lord shall not be in vain, and that victory must eventually perch upon the standard of the Cross, you are called on to put forth all your resources, physical, intellectual and moral, to push forward the chariot of the gospel, and hasten the time, when the trump of God shall sound the completion of the battle, and the achievement the final victory.

But your station is an arduous one, your duties are numerous, your labours severe, your temptations many, and your enemies formidable; hence we admonish you in the words of Paul to Timothy, *Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*

We say, first,

1. *Take heed to your* HEARTS, and be careful that they remain the temples of the Holy Ghost. We take it for granted that you have felt the renewing and cleansing efficacy of the gospel, and that you accordingly know from your own happy experience, what it is to be born of God. Without this, you would be awfully wanting in one of the most important requisites to a faithful exhibition of divine truth and a profitable discharge of ministerial duty. For how could you instruct others if you are ignorant yourselves?—how enlighten the people of your charge, if you are yourselves in worse than Egyptian darkness?—how point out to others the way to heaven, if you are yourselves unacquainted with it and walk not in it? Is it not evident that you would be blind leaders of the blind? But we expect better things of you, and are persuaded that your hearts have been renewed by the gospel which you have been set apart to promulge. And we admonish you to take heed that you constantly remain under the sanctifying influence of that gospel. 'Keep thy heart with all diligence;' (says the wise man, Prov iv. 23.) for out of it are the issues of life.' 'Hold that fast which thou hast,'(says the Saviour, Rev. iii. 11.) that no man take thy crown.' Let the love of God dwell richly in your bosoms and the torch of faith burn brighter and brighter within you. Search out your imperfections that you may subdue them, enter deeply and vitally into the mysteries of godliness, that you may unfold & illustrate them to others. The farther you advance in experimental piety, the more practically you become acquainted with the unsearchable riches of divine grace, the better you will be qualified to instruct others and the more abundantly successful will your labours prove to the souls committed to your charge. Take heed therefore to your hearts and to your own spiritual improvement.—Aspire to a perfect assimilation to the character of Christ and to a purity of heart, and a sanctity of mind equal to that of God himself. We say again,

2. *Take heed to your* EXTERNAL WALK.

You must preach by your example as well as by your precepts. The principles you proclaim must be illustrated in your conduct, and the whole of your conversation must be a shining exemplification of your pulpit performances.

Thus must your works and virtues shine,
To prove your doctrines all divine;
Thus shall you best proclaim abroad,
The honors of your Saviour God!

What will it avail to publish the purest dogmas with your lips if you deny them in your actions?—to what purpose will it be to administer reproof, exhortation and warning, if you give the lie to all you say by an inconsistent—an unholy life! Moreover is it not natural for the flock to follow the Shepherd; and if he go wrong, will they not go wrong also?

Himself a wanderer from the narrow way;
His silly sheep, no wonder if they stray!

And considering that if, through the watchman's fault sinners perish, their blood will be required at his hands; what an awful account must such have to render, through whose ungodly walk or neglect of duty, immortal souls are lost! May Heaven in mercy forbid it, that any one of us should ever thus imbrue his hands in the blood of 'blood-bought souls,' and become the instrument of destruction to those for whose salvation alone we are appointed to labour! Oh let it therefore be indelibly engraven on your minds, that you must adorn the doctrine of God, your Saviour, in all things; that you must 'so let your light shine that others may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven,' Matt. V. 16; nay, that it is your duty to be burning and shining lights, placed upon a hill, as a beacon to others in the midst of a dark world, and as a practical commendation of the gospel you preach. St. Paul says to Timothy; (1 Epis iv. 12.) 'Be thou an example of the beleivers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;' and again to Titus: 'in all things shew thyself a pattern of good works.' Titus. 2. 7 We say further,

3. *Take heed to your* MENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

You have passed through a regular course of study and in your examination prior to your instalment into office, you acquitted yourselves with honor But you still have need to be industrious students and to prosecute your literary researches with untiring assiduity. Having entered through the portals of the temple of science; and taken a general view of its departments, those departments remain yet to be more fully explored. If we relax our exertions in this respect our fund of knowledge will soon be exhausted; our public discourses will become dull repetitions, wanting in order and interest, and our hearers will retire from the sanctuary unsatisfied and unprofited; whilst we ourselves will be exposed to the contempt of those whose reverence we should enjoy. Ignorance and bigotry and enthusiasm may inveigh against these observations, but

wise men and men of knowledge and experience, we are sure will cordially concur in them; and universal experience abundantly confirms their truth. St. Paul expressly admonishes Timothy, verse 13, 'to give attendance to *reading*, to exhortation, to doctrine,' and verse 15, 'to *meditate* upon these things, to give himself *wholly to them*, that his profiting may appear to all.' Our Lord requires us not only to 'search the scriptures' but also to be 'scribes, well instructed unto the kingdom of Heaven; bringing forth out of your treasures things both new and old.' Mat. xiii. 52. We say,

4. *Take heed to your* SERMONS. Prepare them with a serious frame of mind, and with fervent prayer for the enlightening influences of the Spirit.—Clothe them in decent, plain and intelligible language; let them be searching, deeply spiritual and abundantly practical. Deliver them with feeling, warmth and energy, and let your people plainly see, that you are concerned for their eternal welfare and are laboring in earnest for the salvation of their souls. For God's sake! do not select the sacred desk to display your learning, to show off to the best advantage your literary attainments, and to obtain the reputation of what the world terms, 'a florid speaker' a 'great orator' or a 'showy preacher.' A man who can thus prostitute the pulpit, and convert it into a vehicle of self-applause and self-aggrandizement, will justly incur the heaviest curse of an insulted God. The Apostle says: 1 Cor. ii. 1 'And I brethren when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom' and verse 4, 'and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom,' and we add with Luther: 'On the pulpit and when laboring to win souls, the minister must consider at least *one half* of his hearers ignorant of the first principles of religion, and aim at being understood by the plainest man, the most unlettered peasant.' From the bottom of my soul I love a plain, serious preacher, who speaks for *my* sake and not for *his own*, who seeks *my salvation* and not *his own vain glory*. It has been well observed by an eminent divine of the present day: 'He best deserves to be heard who uses speech only to clothe his thoughts and his thoughts only to promote virtue and truth, but a professed declaimer, who retails his discourses as a quack does his medicines, is heartily to be pitied and despised.' And finally,

5. *Take heed to your* DOCTRINE. See that you preach not heresies nor give currency to false opinions. If you depart from the simplicity of the gospel, and proclaim your idle dreams and fancies, or seek to amuse the people with philosophical disquisitions and metaphysical theories, you will certainly spend your strength for nought, whilst the hungry and perishing souls committed to your charge will drop into hell and their blood required at your hands on the day of accounts. St. Paul

says, 'A Bishop must hold fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.' Tit. i. 9. 'That he must speak the things that become sound doctrine.' Tit. ii. 1. and 'shewing sound speech that cannot be condemned.,' Tit. ii. 7, 8. Let the gospel of Christ therefore, be the fountain whence you derive all your religious views, and according to that standard, test and decide upon every doctrine of religion, that is presented to you for acceptation. Then we are sure, that *Christ and him crucified* will be the burden of your ministerial performances, and the theme of all your discourses; and that, like the Apostle, you will be determined 'to glory only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.' Gal. vi. 14. Then will the smiles of heaven light upon your labours, the spirit of divine grace will impart energy to your declarations, sinners will be converted and you become a blessing to yourselves and those entrusted to your care. Salvation will crown your efforts, and be the result to your own souls and the souls of them that hear you. For the Apostle assures us 'that in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.' What a reward is this! who can properly estimate it! Salvation, eternal salvation! a complete deliverance from all evil, bodily and spiritual, the enjoyment of the presence of God, of the society of angels, and of all the glory of heaven shall be our recompence! Salvation, eternal salvation! O what a reward! who can properly estimate it! What are riches, what are honors, what are sensual gratifications, nay, what are thrones, and dominions, and sceptres and crowns compared with it? Verily, the civic wreath fades, the warrior's laurel fades, the Emperor's crown ceases to sparkle when contrasted with it; the richest mines of all the Indies, the world with all its pleasures and treasures lose their value and sink into contempt when put into competition with it.

Nor is this all, you shall not only save yourselves, but those also who hear you You shall be the favored instruments of rescuing from the thraldom of Satan and the dominion of sin, and of bringing them to Christ and to heaven.

Souls, immortal blood bought souls shall be given to you for your hire, "as your hope, your joy, your crown of rejoicing." When you pass through the everlasting gates of the city of the great God, they shall hail your arrival and crowd around you to give you thanks for the faithfulness of your labours, and for your instrumentality in their salvation Go forth then in the name of the Lord God of Hosts, and preach the word, be instant in season and out of season. Do the work of Evangelists and (Tit. 1. 5.) shun not to declare all the counsel of God, and keep back nothing that is profitable, Acts XX. 20, 27. Take heed as

long as you live, to your *hearts*, to your *external walk*, to your *mental improvement*, to your *sermons*, and to your *doctrines*. Instruct the young, comfort those that mourn, enlighten the ignorant, bring back the wandering, alarm the guilty, and confirm and encourage the faithful.—Preach good tidings unto the meek, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. "Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." Isa. LXI. 1. 2. "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," Matt. X 16. "Feed the flock of God committed to your care," and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, "ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1st. Peter, V, 4.—AMEN.

Something for the Heart, &c.

(*Continued from page* 195.)

Sec. 14. *Religion!* What is it? He that chooses may read a variety of printed answers to this question. Every author gives an opinion on the subject. I will likewise give mine, in my brief and simple manner.

I consider Religion throughout to be the business of the heart. There must be a plain simplicity about it, as it is to suit *all* men, the majority of whom are ignorant of spiritual devices; there must be nothing *difficult* to comprehend about it, since it must be also adapted to weak capacities; nothing requiring a deep erudition or a high degree of ingenuity, for the illiterate and those having but common sense, are not to be excluded from it. In what then does Religion consist? I submit the following confident answer to the judgment of the reader.

Religion is the re-union of man with God, together with every thing belonging to or ensuing in consequence of it. It is true, this includes the humiliating expression, that a melancholy separation preceded this re-union. The fall of our first parents. with its terrible consequences we admit. We must grant this, unless we be perfectly blind in regard to ourselves and our fellow-sinners. If this lamentable separation of the most glorious creature from the Creator was not to endure for ever, measures must be taken to effect a re-union. And who could devise them? Not fallen man surely—no, not the whole of his posterity. *God* alone was capable of it. He effected it by Christ and in Christ. Through the agency of this crucified and resuscitated God-Man, the possibility of such a re-union was perfectly established. All things tending to its formation are now ready. God meets the sinner in Christ and invites him to run into his embraces. If the sinner accept the invitation and

surrender his heart to Christ, just as it is, he then begins to come to God by him. Now the plant of our heavenly Father's planting is set; it grows, blossoms, has strength to bear good fruits and does yield them. If then this man, who has been thus mercifully received, abide in the faith of Christ and in the enjoyment of his merits, he will through Him always approach nearer to God; and if he persevere in this faith and in this enjoyment unto his life's end, he is again united to God thro' Christ to that degree and extent, which his primitive destiny had prescribed for him. In this *true* Religion consists, and I feel exceedingly thankful that it consists in nothing *more*. It is open to *all* and is adapted to all, even the weakest capacies. Did it consist in a studied, profound speculation, to which the greatest literati only could have access, for the investigation of which, great talents, skill and persevering exertions were required, what great reason should I have to bewail my weak, illiterate, simple and artless fellow mortals, as well as myself! O my God, thou Lord of heaven and earth, for this I laud and magnify Thy Name, that Religion is a something that may be *thoroughly* conceived and enjoyed by babes.

Sec. 15. *Religion* is the *sublimest* work we can form an idea of, venerable in the sight of all the heavenly host. Jehovah himself—God over all therein deals with man and man God—the Creator with his creature and the creature with his Creator. The essential *communion* between God and man is again restored and established. The Restorer, the Founder is God and He alone, It is *His* thought, *His* will, *His* wish: In it, God in Christ is the active and efficient—man merely the receiving and submitting party. We cannot repeat this truth too often; God in Christ draws near to the sinner, offering him the necessary requisites towards a radical change of heart; the sinner ceases to resist, submits to every divine operation in his heart, & accepts whatsoever is proffered to him out of the fulness of Jesus Christ. His re-union with God is then actually commenced, it progresses and is finally effectually consummated. A work this, deserving of our adoration throughout the endless ages of eternity—an inexhausted spring of ceaseless joy to us!

That which generally passes under the name of Religion is merely the natural and infallible *effect* of this grand *cause*, this sublimest of works. Whosoever aims and strives to be more and more and at last *wholly* united *to God* in Christ and to abide in this union forever, *cannot but love* God in Christ, and Christ in God supremely, with increasing fervor, *live* to Him, *serve* Him according to his best ability, in thought, word and deed, *honor* Him with filial *fear*—faithfully *keep* his commandments—*follow* after holiness—*praise* Him joyfully—*worship* Him with reverence and humility—*mention* to Him all his faults as well as all his ailments—*fly*

to Him by prayer and supplication in every need—confidently *expect* from Him every aid—be *resigned* by faith to His will—in short, *believe* in Him and thus believing, press forward to the glorious mark that is set before him.

Observing these things, we at once, and fully discharge our duty to God and our neighbour.

I therefore maintain that the worship, the fear, the adoration and glorification of God, a conscientious and faithful discharge of our duties and whatever else we are wont to comprize under the head of Religion, is the simple and natural effect of the re-union of man with God in Christ, as that true and only religion which engages the believer's heart and being a pure work of Divine Love, at the same time humbles us, the most noble of all His works, into the dust before Jehovah Jesus!

(To be Continued.)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

Parent Domestic Missionary and Education Society.

Rev. Dr. Kurtz, Baltimore, *Rev. D. F. Schaeffer, Fred'k,*
" *J. G. Morris,* " *Lewis Medtart, Esq.* "
John Reese, Esq. " *Geo. Engelbrecht, Esq.* "
David Martin, Esq. "

The above committee determines upon the qualification of all applicants for pecuniary aid—appoints Missionaries, and designates the field of their labors, with the advice of the President of the Synod; and for the present, we would merely add, that all communications upon the subject, should be addressed to the Rev. John G. Morris, Corresponding Secretary, free of postage.

Contributions for poor students or Missionaries, will be received by Lewis Medtart, Esq. Treasurer of the Parent Society, and gratefully acknowledged.

From Littell's Religious Magazine.

Capture of Babylon.

" Meanwhile, Cyrus well informed of the confusion and disorder which generally prevailed during these orgies of the Babylonians, not only in the halls of the palace, but among all the more vulgar votaries of pleasure in the luxurious city, had taken such measures as secured him at last access to the very gates of the banquet room.

" Cyrus had stationed during the day a part of his troops on that side

of Babylon where the river entered into the city, and another part on that side where the waters issued out of the city, and gave orders to their commanders to enter the town by the channel of the Euphrates the moment they perceived it was fordable.

"Having issued the necessary orders, and exhorted his officers to follow him, by assuring them that he marched under the guidance of the gods, he sent up a party of his men to the head of the canal leading into the great lake, which has already been described, with orders to break down the great bank or dam, and to turn the current of the river into that immense reservoir. He then in the evening made them open the trenches on both sides of the river to let the water run off. By this means the Euphrates was quickly emptied, and by midnight the channel of the river was dry.

"The two bodies of troops posted on either side of the city entered the bed of the river, the one commanded by Gobrias, and the other under the orders of Gadates. Both advanced towards each other without impediment. That invisible and invincible Power who had promised to guide and conduct the Persian to his destined quarry, had rendered the negligence and riot of that festive night the ministers of his secret purposes. The gates of brass, never open on any other occasion, had this night been left unclosed. The ascent from the river to the city was free, and invited the easy approach of the invader. Both parties met according to appointment at the gate of the royal palace, and, surprising the guards of Belshazzer, instantly, cut them in pieces.

"Some of the thousand lords who were revelling at the board of the monarch, hearing a tumult at the gate, came out to enquire the cause; upon which the Persian soldiers rushed in upon the astonished guests, and quickly made themselves masters of the palace. Perceiving the king with his sword drawn, standing in the midst of his courtiers, who had risen up to his rescue, the Persians slew him as he valiantly fought for his life. All his attendants were put to death. Cyrus caused proclamation to be made, promising life and safety to those who should lay down their arms, and denouncing death on every one who should attempt to resist the conqueror. All quietly yielded to the victor, and Cyrus without more resistance, became master of the palace, and of mighty Babylon.

"By this blow an end was put to the Assyrian empire of Babylon, which had existed two hundred and ten years from the usurpation of Nabopolassar. The power of the proud city was annihilated just fifty years after she had razed to the foundation the city and temple of Jerusalem; and here closed the denunciations of the prophets, so far as they related to the taking of Babylon, and the extinction of the dynasty of the reigning family.

"Nor were these prophecies merely fulfilled in the capture of the city, but in all the minutiæ of their details. The city was rioting in all its pride, luxury, and impiety, at the moment when the victor was within its gates. 'Evil shall come upon thee, thou shalt not know whence it ariseth.' The princes rose from the banquet to inquire into the cause of a noise without the gates, and in a few moments afterwards the Persians had slain the king:—'Desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.' In an instant she was overpowered, and in captivity:—'I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware.' And as a bird is taken in a snare, so the Chaldeans' excellency was surprised and inclosed by the Persian.

"The Babylonians confided and gloried in their river, as the Trojans in their palladium. Euphrates in all the majesty of his waves was their van-guard and their rear-guard. Girt around by his many waters, they rested secure, and were unconscious of fear. Yet this very sentinel was their enemy; this watchman who had sat in his ward whole nights for many a century, cried not out 'a lion, my lord;' but revolting to the side of the enemy, betrayed the city which confided in his care. 'O thou that dwellest upon many waters!—the passages are stopped—the reeds have they burned with fire—a drought is upon her waters—I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry.'

"The circumstances in which the conqueror should find the voluptuous city, are depicted with the same truth and force of colouring:—'I will make drunk her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men; they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake, saith the Lord.'

"The terror, astonishment, and trembling of the impious king, are described by the holy prophet who witnessed them, nearly in the same words in which Belshazzar is pourtrayed by the prophet who predicted them two centuries before. 'My loins are filled with pain—I was bowed down at the hearing of it—I was dismayed at the seeing of it—my heart panted—fearfulness affrighted me—the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear'

"The carelessness and recklessness of the proud and impenitent monarch, even after he had beheld the hand-writing on the wall, and after his terrors had subsided, are delineated with the same unerring pencil. It is apparent, that very soon after Daniel had gone out from the royal presence, and Belshazzar had regained his composure, the festivities, if they had been interrupted, were resumed and continued. For the prophet exclaims in vision, 'Prepare the table, and watch in the watch-tower—eat—drink' Thus the guards had been doubled on the wall, or orders had been given for that purpose; but that they had not been

attended to is evident, from the unchallenged access which Cyrus found through the 'open two-leaved gates.'

"Though profane history gives no account of the sacking of Babylon, but pauses after relating its fall; yet the prophets, so minutely and circumstantially particular in predicting all the other parts of this striking scene, could not be, and certainly were not mistaken, or superfluous in their descriptions of this. 'Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined to them shall fall by the sword—the children shall be dashed into pieces—the houses shall be spoiled—the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken—her high gates shall be burned with fire. How is Sheshach taken, and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised!—Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle. Say Babylon is taken—Bel is confounded—Merodach is broken in pieces.!'

"The unburied corpse of the king is also described as cast out without sepulture, and the royal family is pronounced extinct: 'Thou art cast out of thy grave as an abominable branch, thou shalt not be joined with them in burial. And I will cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord'

"However profuse our quotations may appear, they contain but a very limited selection from the innumerable passages of the holy scriptures in which the ruin of Babylon is foretold. The two great events which occupied the minds of the prophets, for a series of years, at one period of the Hebrew history, seem to have been the chastisement of their own nation by the power of Assyria; and the retributive indignation of God upon that people for their cruelty to the captivity. The restoration of the captivity, indeed, is also the subject of frequent prediction, and the promise of the Messiah, couched under so many forms, is the alpha and omega of all scripture; but, as connected with the temporal and secular history of the nation, the destruction of that haughty and insolent despotism, which so cruelly oppressed the Jews, appears to be the most frequent and fearfully sublime subject of tremendous and vindictive denunciation. How far that destruction was accomplished by the Persians, it is difficult to ascertain; but a few notices from early historians, and from the works of travellers in different ages since that period, will enable us to show that not one word regarding her desolation, has failed of its accomplishment."

What destroys the happiness of families? What degrades the intellect of man? What makes amiable wives widows? The waters of bitterness. Whence do the waters of bitterness flow? From the Brandy bottle.

The Power of Religion.

The following sketch will be read with interest, not merely on account of the remarkable facts related, but as coming from the pen of the late lamented Colonial Agent, Mr. Ashmun. African Repository.

L. C. a black man, has been a member of this Colony since the beginning of the year 1820. He had made a profession of religion in America, but never since I knew him, either discharged its duties or evinced much of its spirit, till within the last 10 months. He was a man of good natural sense, but wretched in the extreme, and the cause of equal wretchedness to his young family. His wife, naturally of a mild and placid temperament, failed in almost every thing to please him, or prevent the constant outbreakings of his morose and peevish humor. He was her tyrant—and so instigated by malevolence, the vain conceit of superiority, jealousy, and obstinate pride, as to resemble more an Arab of the desert. or a person destitute of natural affection, than a person by education and in name a Christian As a neighbor, his feelings were so soured and narrow, as to render him disobliging, suspicious, and equally an object of general dislike and neglect. His heart was a moral desert, no kind affection seemed to stir within it—and the bitter streams which it discharged, had spread a moral desolation around him, and left him the solitary victim of his own corroding tempers.

Such an ascendant had these evil qualities over the faculties of his mind, as in a great measure to dim the light of reason, and render him as a subject of the colonial government, no less perverse and untractable, than he was debased and wretched as a man. Several times have the laws which guard the peace of our little community, been called in to check the exercise of his turbulent passions, by supplying the weakness of more ingenuous motives. Still this person discovered in the midst of this wreck of moral excellence, a few remaining qualities, on which charity might fix the hope of his recovery to virtue, usefulness and happiness. But these were few, and mostly of a negative kind.—He was not addicted to profane discourse. He allowed himself in no intemperate indulgences. He observed towards sacred institutions, a cold, but still an habitual respect; and strange as the fact may seem, he was laborious in his avocations, even to severe drudgery, and equally a stranger to avarice and a passion for vain ostentation. Whether these relieving traits of his character were the effects of habits produced by the influence of former religious impressions, or whether they were the result of constitutional temperament, or of education, is not for me to

decide. But such was L C. until the autumn of 1824 when not only a reform, but an absolute reversal of every disposition and habit in the revolting catalogue of his character took place A more obliging and affectionate husband, I sm convinced, is not to be found on this Cape; few, indeed, in the world! And there is no appearance of constraint or affectation in this display of tenderness. It is uniform, untiring, cordial, and increasing, as far as it is permitted any one except the Searcher of hearts to judge. In all his intercourse with his family and neighbors, he carries with him an inimitable air of sweet humility. You would pronounce it to be the meekness of the heart springing from some deep-felt sentiment of the interior of the mind. But so far from abasing the possessor in the estimation of others, this very trait commands their respect and their love. It gives him a value he never appeared to possess before. Ten months have I now had daily opportunities to observe this altered man in a great variety of circumstances, and some of them, it must be confessed, sufficiently trying. In one instance I have had to regret and censure the appearance of that perversity which made an important part of his former character. But happily this fit of turbulence was of short duration; and some months have since passed without witnessing a repetition of the infirmity. Were I this evening asked to name the man in the Colony, who would most carefully guard against offending, or causing even a momentary pain to any of his fellow-men, I should not hesitate to say that in my judgment, the man is L. C. On this point I insist, because it was precisely in his revolting and unfeeling churlishness, that his greatest and most incurable infirmity seemed to consist. I hardly need add, were silence not liable to misconstruction, that the duties and ordinances of religion are matters of his most devout and diligent observance. How often have I been awaked at the dawn of Sabbath, by his devout strains of prayer and praise sent up from the midst of a little company of praying people, who at that hour assemble for religious exercises in a vacant building near my residence. How sure am I to find him reverently seated in his place among the earliest who assemble in the house of God.

What an active promoter of every commendable and pious design is sure to be found in him. Every laudable habit, which had survived the general extinction of all practical virtue, seems to have acquired additional confirmation: and from the operation of higher principles, seems to follow of course, and derive the best guaranty of its continuance. I might go on to particularize—but it would only be to fill up the outline already sketched; and which, whether relating to his former or his present character, however imperfect, is strictly true. Ask of him the causes of so obvious and surprising a change, and he hum-

bly, but unhesitatingly ascribes it wholly to the power of the Divine Spirit, operating, he cannot tell how, but evidently by means of the word and ordinances of God, upon his whole mind. Such was the origin of this great moral renovation—and such are the agency and means by which its effects are sustained, and under the operation of which they are beginning to combine into a habit of holiness. He rejoices in the hope of its duration to the end of life, solely, he would say, from the confidence he has in the immutable love and faithfulness of the Holy Being who has wrought so great a work in him. And let philosophers cavil and doubt if they must, but this man's example is a refutation in fact, of a thousand of their sceptical theories. He is a new man—and the change was effected chiefly before discipline, or example had time to work it. He is an honest man; and soberly asserts, that to his certain knowledge, he did not perform the work himself. But where is the example to be found, of *such* and *so great* a change wrought by mortal means? The history of the human race is challenged to produce it. To God then, who created man, to Christ, who redeemed him; and to the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies him, be ascribed without abatement, or reserve, the power and the grace displayed in this and every similar instance of the conversion of a blind, and hardened, and wretched sinner.—*Monrovia, July* 3, 1825.

Trials of the Ministry.

No one can know the trials of the ministry, except those who undertake the arduous employment, or those who reside in their families. When we consider how much clergymen's time is occupied by unavoidable company at home, how many special meetings, if they are faithful to their Master, they must attend; what a large portion of their time is occupied with visiting the sick, how much in necessary preparations for the pulpit, and then, in addition to all this, what numbers of parochial visits they are required to make, and censured if they do not; it must appear obvious that their task is arduous, their trials peculiarly great. It is a great trial to be obliged to attempt study when the mind is distracted with the burden of a whole society. It is a trial to be, as it were compelled to spend that time in visiting, which ought to be devoted to writing and meditation; and then to be censured for negligent and ill digested sermons; or, if time and pains are taken to write good sermons, to be complained of for visiting so little. Surely if societies and churches knew the trials of their ministers, in addition to those personal troubles which are common to all:

they would be more tender of them, more fervent in prayer for them. I do not wonder that so many of the labourers in the Lord's vineyard faint before mid-day. They ought, in every way, to be strengthened, and comforted, and encouraged by their people.—*Mrs. Huntington.*

The Taste of the Times.

"Any thing" said a friend of mine, who sometimes sells books, "any thing but *Sermons*. They will not sell. I have taken pains to get some of the best stamp; and with much ado, I may contrive perhaps to *give* them away." Such, in some parts of the country it seems, is the general taste. Men, women, and children bless themselves for their discernment in seeing that a novel may be a very fine book; but a Sermon *must* be a very dull thing. Who ever reads a Sermon? One may now and then sacrifice a nine-pence to the vanity of a preacher, who wishes to appear in print; but who thinks of *reading* what he has bought in this way? But what ails this species of writing, that it is so generally esteemed unworthy of attention? It is no uncommon thing to find in a Sermon a train of the richest and most valuable thought, conducted with a rigorous, polished, discriminative hand. What often makes Sermons such dull and forbidding things to the majority of readers is I fear, the short passage from an old Book, which is prefixed to them. Many persons are persuaded, that nothing *new* can be said about the Bible;—they cannot keep themselves awake beneath the pulpit, where they commonly "attend meeting;" and they fear, they should either fall asleep or get uneasy, if they were to undertake *to read* a Sermon. But men, who talk in this way, seem not to be aware, that, saying nothing of the state of their *hearts*, they manifest a very *bad taste*. For passing by other ages; where can better composition, in a literary point of view, be found, than may easily be had in many of the Sermons, which our own times are producing? What a rich variety of thought and style, do they not present! Would you see a flow of manly, unrestrained, and simple eloquence, move on in a deep and rapid current, now calmly reflecting the face of heaven, and now broken in a thundering cataract? Or, would you have the page you read, arrayed with all the stateliness and pomp of awful majesty;—a majesty, which never speaks but in measured terms, nicely balanced in their construction and harmonious in their arrangement? Or, are you fond of sparkling thoughts, lively images, splendid illustrations? Or, do you like to see good sense and ardent piety, expressed with all the easy gracefulness, the charming artlessness, the sweet simplicity, of which our good mother-tongue is capable?—

You need not run mad after the light literature, which is now-a-days afloat in the form of novels, "keep-sakes," ladies magazines. You may have what you want, if you want what you ought, among the Sermons, yes, among the *Sermons*, which my friend, spoken of above, finds it so hard to sell. Who, especially what American, has not heard of *Pitt*? He made the world ring with the praises of his eloquence;—an eloquence full of point, and pith, and power. But it ought to be known, that BARROW'S SERMONS was Pitt's favorite book, which he read, till he nearly learned it by heart, *Dryden* too, the rapid, copious, vehement, and powerful Dryden; and *Addison*, whose thoughts flowed from his pen with such precision, clearness, and accuracy; and yet with such ease, simplicity and grace;—who led these men to the "wells of English undefiled?" It was TILLOTSON, in whose immortal Sermons, they found a model, on which they formed, and fashioned; and refined their taste.—These are facts, which I hope my friend, the bookseller, will not forget to tell the next man, who turns up his nose at a *Sermon*, "*as a dull thing of course.*" *Vermont Chronicle.*

Trickery Exposed.

A short time since, (says an English gentleman who has recently visited Lisbon,) the Priests found, or pretended to have found, an image, dug up from the earth, and proclaimed it to be the effigy of an eminent Saint; it was accordingly set up in one of the churches, where crowds of devotees assembled to pay their adorations. To his Saintship was also referred the disputed point, who was the legitimate Monarch of Portugal? The officiating priest put the question, in an audible voice, 'Is Don Pedro the lawful Sovereign of these realms?' The saint shook his head as a negative indication. 'Is Don Miguel the Sovereign?' The image nodded assent. This was repeated on various occasions, to increased congregations, and was considered by the multitude as an astonishing miracle. At one time, in the presence of our informant, the first inquiry was replied to as usual; to the second, no answer was given; upon which the priest several times repeated the question, and at length assumed great vehemence of manner, when a boy popped his head from behind the curtain, and exclaimed, 'It is not my fault, sir, *the string is broken!*' *New York Observer.*

Martyrdom of a Little Boy.

Church History furnishes us with the following instance of early piety:—At Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, a child named Cyril, in a time of heavy persecution, called continually on the name of Jesus Christ; and neither threats nor blows could divert him from it Many children of his own age persecuted him; and his unnatural father, who was a heathen, turned him out of doors. At last they brought him before the judge, who both threatened and entreated him; but he said, "I rejoice to bear your reproaches,—God will receive me: I am glad that I am expelled out of our house,—I shall have a better mansion. I fear not death; because it will introduce me to a better life." In the end he was condemned to the flames, with a full expectation that he would recant and save his life; but he persisted, saying, "Your fire and your sword are insignificant,—I go to a better house, and more excellent riches; despatch me presently, that I may enjoy them." They did so, and he suffered martyrdom amidst a throng of wondering beholders.